

REMARKS

Claims 12, 20, 23, 28-34, 47, 52, 53, 57-63, 80-82 and 90-247 are pending in the above-captioned patent application following this supplemental amendment. The Applicants have amended claim 12 by this amendment for the purpose of expediting the patent application process in a manner consistent with the goals of the Patent Office pursuant to 65 Fed. Reg. 54603 (September 8, 2000).

Support for the amendments to claim 12 can be found throughout the originally filed claims, the drawings and the specification. More specifically, support for the amendment to claim 12 can be found at least in original claims 1-40 and 69-87, in Figures 1-4, 8-16 and 18, and in the specification at page 7, line 19, through page 8, line 9, at page 8, line 22 through page 9, line 6, at page 11, line 21 through page 12, line 5, at page 20, line 20 through page 26, line 31, and at page 32, line 11 through page 43, line 14.

No new matter is believed to have been added by this amendment. Consideration of the pending application is respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claim 12 has previously been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Loopstra et al (US Patent No. 5,969,441). The Applicants have amended claim 12 as provided above. The Applicants submit that the features of amended claim 12 are not taught or suggested by the cited references.

In contrast to the cited references, amended claim 12 is directed toward a stage assembly that requires "a stage that retains the device; a stage base that directly supports the stage; a stage mover assembly connected to the stage, the stage mover assembly moving the stage with at least two degrees of freedom and generating reaction forces in at least two degrees of freedom; a reaction mass assembly coupled to the stage mover assembly, the reaction mass assembly being adapted to reduce the reaction forces in at least two degrees of freedom that are transferred to the stage base; and a reaction mover assembly that adjusts the position of the reaction mass assembly relative to the stage base along an X axis, along a Y axis and about a Z axis." These features are not taught or suggested by the cited references. Thus, amended claim 12 is considered to be

patentable. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claim 12 has been overcome.

Version with markings to show changes made

In the Claims:

Claim 12 has been amended as follows:

12. (Second Amended) A stage assembly that is adapted to move a device [relative to a stage base], the stage assembly comprising:

a stage [adapted to retain] that retains the device;

a stage base that directly supports the stage;

a stage mover assembly connected to the stage, the stage mover assembly moving the stage with at least two degrees of freedom and generating reaction forces in at least two degrees of freedom;

a reaction mass assembly coupled to the stage mover assembly, the reaction mass assembly [being adapted to reduce] reducing the reaction forces in at least two degrees of freedom that are transferred to the stage base; and

a reaction mover assembly that adjusts the position of the reaction mass assembly relative to the stage base along an X axis, along a Y axis and about a Z axis.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Applicants respectfully assert that claims 12, 20, 23, 28-34, 47, 52, 53, 57-63, 80-82 and 90-247 are patentable for the reasons set forth above, and that the application is now in a condition for allowance. Accordingly, an early notice of allowance is respectfully requested. The Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at 858-456-1951 for any reason that would advance the instant application to issue.

Dated this 13th day of March, 2003.

Respectfully submitted,



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